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ABSTRACT

Reported here is information about a 2-week training course on the topic of early childhood education in Thailand. Sections include (1) background information on the status of preschool education in Thailand and data on program participants, (2) objectives of the course, (3) description of program activities and procedures, (4) review and conclusions of the program, and (5) student evaluation questions. A list of participants is also included. (BJD)

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R E P O R T

ON-THE-SPOT COURSE

on

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

in PHITSANULOK, THAILAND

26 July - 10 August, 1983

conducted by:

Dr. Lynne S. Jasik, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Mrs. Rebecca Horowitz, Mount Carmel International Training Centre

in cooperation with:

The Ministry of Education of Thailand

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We are grateful to the Demonstration School of the College, the Wat Jungnan School, the Rojanawit School and the Wangchan Kindergarten School that enabled the course participants to observe the children, the educational environments, the learning activities and the materials which reinforced and helped to integrate the content of the course.

The cooperation and enthusiasm of the participants throughout the course gave it a special stimulus.

Lynne S. Jasik Rebecca Horowitz

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The Teacher Training Department of the Ministry of Education
of Thailand

S T A F F

Dr. Lynne Jasik, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Mrs. Rebecca Horowitz, Mount Carmel International Training
Centre for Community Development (MCTC)*

coordinated and taught the course

*Mrs. Chaviwan Chungchareon, Ministry of Education, Thailand
was responsible for planning and organisation
of the course, recruitment of participants
and the supervision throughout the duration
of the study.*

*Miss Puangthong Saiyawan, Faculty of Education,
Phibulsongkram, T.T.C.*

*facilitated the smooth functioning of the
workshop, assisted by the staff of the College*

*Dr. Pikun Prasertsi, Supervisory Unit, Teacher Education
Department,*

*Dr. Patana Chutpong, Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok
provided simultaneous translation and
interpretation*

INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in 1961, the Mount Carmel International Training Centre for Community Development (MCTC), has assisted in training personnel from developing countries who are engaged in community work.

MCTC courses are planned and carried out in consultation with the University of Haifa and in cooperation with other institutes in Israel specialising in areas related to development.

In addition to these programmes, the Centre conducts on-the-spot courses in the countries of its students, at the requests of local authorities or institutions.

The On-the-Spot Course on Early Childhood Education covered by this report was the third on this subject conducted by MCTC in Thailand. The first was held in 1980 in cooperation with the Srinakharinwirot University in Baengsen; the second, in 1981, in Chiangmai, and the third, in 1983, in Phitsanuloke. The two latter courses were organised jointly with the Teacher Education Department of the Thai Ministry of Education.

Thailand had cooperated with the Mount Carmel Training Centre previously by providing local settings for international groups of MCTC participants in courses on early childhood education and also community development, to conduct their final practical field work exercises. In addition, many Thai students have attended in-service courses at MCTC in Israel.

One outcome of all this educational exchange is the organisation of local workshops in Thailand that are conducted by teachers who are graduates of MCTC courses.

BACKGROUND

Only a limited number of children attend preschool classes in Thailand. Of these, a majority are conducted by the private sector.

In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness and interest in early childhood education on the part of the government and individuals due, in part, to the need to offer a service for children as an assistance to working parents. In particular, there is a desire to help people in the rural areas.

Parallel with this interest in establishing child-care centres, there is a need to train teachers for them. In order to meet the expanding demand for child-care services, teacher training colleges are being assigned the responsibility to provide in-service courses in early childhood education.

As a result of successful family planning programmes there are now fewer pupils in elementary schools, thus limiting job opportunities for elementary teachers. The National Commission for Elementary Education and the Teacher Education Department of the Ministry of Education are jointly planning supplementary training in order to integrate elementary school teachers in the new programmes for early childhood.

Participants

There were 46 participants from all over Thailand in the local course that is described here.

The group consisted of representatives from Universities, Teacher Training Colleges, the National Committee for Elementary Education, Social Welfare and Community Development, and private schools. They encompassed a wide range of professional experience and knowledge, and carried out various roles and responsibilities in

their capacities of: teachers, teacher trainers, supervisors, policy planners, research personnel, curriculum developers, social welfare officers and community development coordinators.

Despite the relatively high level of the participants few persons understood English, and therefore simultaneous translation was required for all the practical work and discussion sessions of the workshop.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

- To provide a general background of Early Childhood Education for personnel that is involved in expanding child-care services in Thailand.
- To enable Teacher Trainers to broaden their understanding in the following areas: child development; techniques of observation; curriculum planning; creating low cost learning materials (by the teachers themselves), peer teaching and evaluation of learning achievements.
- To provide several exercises and techniques that would be applicable to planning local workshops.

FORMAL OPENING

The formal ceremony for the opening of the course was attended by the Governor of the Province, Mr. Sueb Radprasert; Israel's Ambassador to Thailand, Mr. Avraham Cohen; the President of Pibulsongkram Teacher Training College, Dr. Mungkorn Thongsukdee; Mrs. A. Cohen; faculty members, course participants and staff.

Greetings were conveyed on behalf of the Director-General of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Panom Raewkamnerd, who was unable to attend.

PROGRAMME AND PROCEDURE

The programme followed the guidelines previously proposed by the Israeli team to Mrs. Chungchareon of the Thai Ministry of Education. It was planned so that each day included:

- An introductory presentation on an educational topic followed by a related group activity; a period for group discussion; analysis and/or evaluation; a presentation of audio-visual materials (slides, film-strips and films), and finally, a workshop period devoted to the preparation of teaching/learning materials.
- Two days were given for field visits to local school as a means of relating practise to theory previously discussed in class.
- Lesson plans were carried out by practise teaching in the demonstration school of the College
- Assignments to develop curriculum content and materials were presented in class through peer teaching.
- All activities, discussions and presentations of the course participants were directly linked to work with children in school, with para professionals, teachers-in-training, and parents. The guiding principle of the course was 'learning through doing' which is important in direct work with children as well as with adults.
- Careful thought was given to the grouping of students for special assignments. This facilitated exchange of ideas and gave opportunities for leadership to develop.
- Towards the end, the class was divided into working groups according to geographical regions. In this way, teachers, teacher-trainers and community development workers who would be working together in the future were able to learn and practise team planning. This has implications for possible regional and district professional exchange in the future.

REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

The broad range of qualified personnel who took part in the course, the diversity of organisation in its support, and the fact that this is another in a series of Israeli-Thai encounters is an indication that there is genuine interest in expanding child services in Thailand. It appears that there is a framework for inter-ministerial cooperation, for nation-wide planning, and for training of adequate personnel.

It was felt by the Israeli team that this workshop would contribute to the projected long-range plans for the rural areas which have already been initiated by the Ministry of Education, Teacher Training Department.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Informal evaluation was an integral part of the course. There was on-going assessment on the participants of teaching styles, programme planning and learning/teaching aids. The purpose was to note what was learned and how the learning could be applied to work with children and adults.

At the end of the course a comprehensive evaluation was conducted. The following five questions were distributed to the participants:

- 1) What did you learn in the course?
- 2) What did you learn from the school visits?
- 3) What can you apply from this course in your work?
- 4) What else would you like to learn?
- 5) Would you like to meet again with this group? Why?

The replies and their analysis by the staff will be incorporated in future guidelines.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Mr. Sagol Theangtae	Chombung Teachers College
2. Mrs. Watana Poonyarit	Suan Dusit Teachers College
3. Mrs. Wilai Bosaereewang	Ayuthaya Teachers College
4. Mr. Yongyodtha Laung-on	Chachensoa College
5. Miss Chintana Puntawong	Chiangmai College
6. Miss Pimkhare Sariwangchan	Chantaburi College
7. Mrs. Kanoung Saykaw	Suwin College
8. Mrs. Rawiwan Rangsayapan	Nakarnsrilhumrat College
9. Miss Thitiya Chanchaoen	Phibulsongkram College
10. Mrs. Nipaporn Promsen	Phibulsongkram College
11. Miss Pengjit Rosupatat	Nakornpathom College
12. Miss Supawadee Loohithan	Kanchanaburi College
13. Miss Saysamorn Doewises	Nakarnsawan College
14. Miss Ratre Swangpol	Petchaburivithalongkorn Teachers College
15. Miss Thiraporn Pimosathais	Burilum Teachers College
16. Miss Nusharee Seejumnong	Songha Teachers College
17. Mr. Arun Kingchan	Chiangmai College
18. Mrs. Kalaya Khcokhem	Khonkhen University
19. Mrs. Sriwan Markshoe	Srinakarinwirot University
20. Mrs. Nongyao Kancpenkac	ONPEC, MOE
21. Miss Phongphan Oki-arwut	ONPEC, MOE
22. Miss Ubal Mongkalsuksawat	Silpakarn University
23. Miss Birion Wongpetch	Public Welfare
24. Mrs. Achana Klaisomboon	Public Welfare
25. Miss Darawon Sopa	Community Development
26. Miss Angkana Thavonpaltanag	Community Development
27. Mrs. Ratana Uthomma	Community Development
28. Mr. Pamorn Boonyaratpan	Community Development
29. Miss Punwadee Suttisuwan	Pitsanuloke Kindergarten School
30. Mrs. Prapasri Suwunnasri	Pitsanuloke Kindergarten School
31. Mrs. Chinde Sukroat	Rojanawit School
32. Mrs. Upin Garporn	Rojanawit School

33. Mr. Wichai Boonkhong	The Office of Private Education Commission
34. Miss Sriwan Somboontup	The Office of Private Education Commission
35. Mrs. Prakang Prampring	Pracharajed Kindergarten School
36. Mrs. Prayaund Bunjund	Pracharajed Kindergarten School
37. Mrs. Supha Ubolchareon	Nangphaya Kindergarten School
38. Miss Krasair Ampun	Nangphaya Kindergarten School
39. Mrs. Ratchnee Patsatan	Nangphaya Kindergarten School
40. Miss Kanchana Intarawat	Pibulsongkram Teachers College
41. Mrs. Buppa Sukaratanapreedhar	Pibulsongkram Teachers College
42. Mrs. Janpen Kanjanarat	Pibulsongkram Teachers College
43. Miss Paungtong Saiyawan	Pibulsongkram Teachers College
44. Mrs. Rachanee Kanvichai	Machsarakam Teachers College